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ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

66011

DRAFTED BY AF:RTIERNEY:NB

APPROVED BY AF:TWSEELYE

S/S-MR.ORTIZ

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TO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

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S E C R E T STATE 296235

NODIS

LONDON FOR AMBASSADOR AND SCHAUFEL USUN FOR SCRANTON ONLY

FOLLOWING REPEAT GENEVA 9664 ACTION SECSTATE 04 DEC 76

QUOTE

S E C R E T GENEVA 9664

NODIS CHEROKEE

TO THE SECRETARY FROM REINHARDT

DEPT PASS LONDON FOR SEITZ

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR RH UK

SUBJECT: RHODESIA CONFERENCE: MEETING WITH NKOMO DEC 3

1. I CALLED ON JOSHUA NKOMO ON DEC 3 FOR WHAT PROVED
TO BE A USEFUL AND OCCASIONALLY EMOTIONAL MEETING.

2. I ASKED NKOMO WHERE MATTERS STOOD IN GENEVA. HE
REPLIED THAT TWO KEY INGREDIENTS ARE MISSING. THE

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BRITISH HAVE NOT DEFINED THE RESPONSIBILITIES THEY INTEND

TO CARRY DURING TRANSITION AND THE RHODESIANS HAVE NOT ELABORATED ON THEIR POSITION. I ASKED NKOMO IF IN HIS JUDGMENT A COMPROMISE FORMULA FOR THE TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT WAS POSSIBLE AND WHETHER HE THOUGHT THAT POWER WOULD BE SHARED IN THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT.

3. NKOMO LAUNCHED INTO A DISCUSSION OF HIS VERSION OF HISTORY. REFERRING TO SMITH'S 24 SEPT SPEECH AND HIS MEETING WITH YOU IN LUSAKA, HE SAID THAT HE WAS GRATEFUL FOR THE FACT THAT YOU HAD EXTRACTED AN AGREEMENT FOR MAJORITY RULE AND SMITH'S AGREEMENT TO ATTEND A CONFERENCE. HE HAD TOLD YOU AT THE TIME THERE WERE VERY SERIOUS FLAWS IN THE FORMULA YOU PRESENTED HIM AND HE HAD NOT AGREED WITH THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE YOU OUTLINED. HE EXPECTED TO BE ABLE TO COME TO GENEVA AND WORK OUT THE STRUCTURE OF AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT AND DID NOT ACCEPT THE FACT THAT IT COULD BE PRENEGOTIATED WITH SMITH AND VORSTER. THE COUNCIL OF STATE AND EVEN THE CONCEPT OF POWER SHARING IN AN UPPER TIER WERE NOT ACCEPTABLE TO HIM. HE HAD NO PROBLEM WITH SMITH ADVANCING THE PROPOSALS BUT HE WOULD NOT ACCEPT THAT THEY WERE ADVANCED AS A "CONTRACT." IF ANYONE HAD EXPECTED THIS TO BE THE CASE, WE WERE AT THE "WRONG PLACE." ALL POWER MUST BE TRANSFERRED TO THE AFRICAN MAJORITY AT THE OUTSET OF THE TRANSITIONAL PROCESS AND HE WOULD NOT AGREE TO ANYTHING SHORT OF THAT.

4. THE MECHANISM FOR TRANSFERRING POWER WOULD BE THROUGH A COUNCIL OF MINISTERS WITHIN WHICH EUROPEANS COULD PARTICIPATE IN A MINORITY POSITION. IN FACT, HIS PROPOSAL FOR A COUNCIL OF MINISTERS FORESAW EUROPEANS HOLDING 5 OUT OF 25 POSITIONS - IN OTHER WORDS, A GREATER DEGREE OF EUROPEAN REPRESENTATION THAN THEIR PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL POPULATION. THE CONFERENCE HAD TO DECIDE WHAT MINISTRIES SMITH'S PEOPLE WOULD GET AND THIS WAS A SUBJECT FOR NEGOTIATIONS.

5. CONCERNING ELECTIONS, NKOMO DID NOT AGREE WITH MUZOREWA'S PROPOSALS THAT ELECTIONS BE HELD FOR THE
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INTERIM GOVERNMENT. IT WAS SIMPLY NOT POSSIBLE DURING A 15 MONTH PERIOD TO HOLD ELECTIONS UNDER SALISBURY AUSPICES IN WHICH CONDITIONS OF WAR AND THE CONTINUED DETENTION OF GREAT NUMBERS OF NATIONALISTS PERTAINED. NKOMO ASSURED ME THAT ELECTIONS WOULD BE HELD BEFORE INDEPENDENCE WAS GRANTED.

6. I ASKED NKOMO WHAT ROLE HE SAW FOR THE BRITISH.

HE SAID THAT HIS DOCUMENT SPEAKS FOR ITSELF. (GENEVA 9620).
BRITAIN'S ROLE WOULD BE LIMITED TO THAT OF DECOLONIZATION.
THE BRITISH, HE SAID, MUST ACCEPT THE FACT THEY ARE A
COLONIZING POWER. IF THEY HAVE NO POWER WITHIN RHODESIA
TODAY "THAT IS THEIR FAULT." AT THE BREAKUP OF THE
CENTRAL AFRICAN FEDERATION, THE NATIONALISTS HAD PROPOSED IN THE
UNITED NATIONS THAT BRITAIN TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE
ARMY AND THE POLICE BUT THE BRITISH REFUSED TO MOVE
AGAINST THEIR "KITH AND KIN." IF ANYONE QUESTIONED THE
LEGALITY OF NETO'S INVITATION TO THE CUBANS THE SOVIETS
IN ANGOLA, NO ONE COULD QUESTION BRITISH INTERVENTION
IN RHODESIA. BRITAIN HAS LEGAL TIES, BUT IF IT REFUSES
TO PLAY ITS PART, THEN THE NATIONALISTS WOULD HAVE TO
CONCLUDE THE BRITISH ARE NOT WILLING AND THE NATIONALISTS
WOULD BE PREPARED TO FIGHT ON BY THEMSELVES.

7. NKOMO ADMITTED THAT THE ROLE HE SAW FOR THE BRITISH
WAS SYMBOLIC BUT IT WAS AN IMPORTANT ROLE. "WE ARE
PREPARED TO ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR SOVEREIGNTY AND TAKE AN
OATH TO THE QUEEN." ALL RHODESIAN TROOPS, INCLUDING
ZIPA, WOULD BE PREPARED TO SWEAR AN OATH OF ALLEGIANCE
TO THE CROWN. OF COURSE, NO TROOPS COULD BE
DEPLOYED BY A BRITISH GOVERNOR GENERAL WITHOUT THE ADVICE
OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS.

8. REFERRING TO SMITH AND HIS ROLE DURING TRANSITION,
NKOMO BECAME INCREASING EMOTIONAL. "WE ARE NOT ASKING
SMITH TO SURRENDER POWER TO US. HE MAY SHARE IN POWER
WHICH BELONGS TO ALL OF THE ZIMBABWEAN PEOPLE OF WHICH
HE IS A PART." IN SHORT, SMITH HAD TO SURRENDER TO THE
PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE. HE ASKED ME TO TELL YOU THAT "WE HAVE
ALL COME TO GENEVA TO SURRENDER POWER TO THE PEOPLE" AND
IF SMITH WANTED TO CONTINUE HOLDING ANY POWER "THE FRUIT
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IS NOT RIPE." HE WAS PERSONALLY HURT BY STATEMENTS TO
THE EFFECT THAT BECAUSE SMITH HAS HELD POWER IN THE PAST
HE MUST CONTINUE TO DO SO. "OUR FRIENDS MUST NOT EXPECT
A 50/50 ARRANGMENT WHEN THE WHITES ARE OUTNUMBERED
22 TO 1. WE WILL NOT AGREE TO ANYTHING AFTER GENEVA
IN WHICH SMITH HOLDS A DOMINATE POSITION IN THE GOVERNMENT."
AFTER HEARING THAT THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT WAS INTENDED TO BE AN
IRREVERSIBLE PROCESS TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE, NKOMO BACK-
TRACKED BUT HE SAID THAT WE HAD TO UNDERSTAND THE COUNCIL
OF STATE, AS DESCRIBED IN THE FIVE POINTS, GIVES SMITH AND
WHITE RHODESIANS UNACCEPTABLE POWER. THE WHITES WILL BE
ABLE TO INFLUENCE A CONSTITUTION WHICH IS NOT ACCEPTABLE
TO NATIONALISTS. THE FIVE POINTS LEAVE THE COUNCIL OF STATE
AND NOT THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS IN A DOMINATE POSITION
AND THEREFORE ARE UNACCEPTABLE TO NKOMO.

COMMENT: THROUGHOUT THE COURSE OF OUR CONVERSATION I WAS STRUCK AGAIN AND AGAIN BY THE DEGREE TO WHICH NKOMO DISTRUSTED SMITH AND THE ROLE THAT HE COULD PLAY DURING TRANSITION. THE TONE OF HIS REMARKS REMINDED ME OF THE STATEMENT ARCHIE MOGWE, THE BOTSWANAN FOREIGN MINISTER, MADE TO ME IN THE MORNING. "IF SMITH WERE DEAD, THE NATIONALISTS WOULD PRICK HIM WITH NEEDLES AND WOULD NOT BELIEVE THEIR EYES IF HE DID NOT WIGGLE." NKOMO IS CONVINCED THAT THE COUNCIL OF STATE ASSURES WHITE DOMINANCE AND IS THEREFORE ADAMANT IN HIS REJECTION OF AN UPPER TIER. HE CHOSE THE OCCASION OF OUR MEETING TO GIVE ME AN UNAMBIGUOUS MESSAGE THAT HE WOULD NOT ACCEPT UNDER ANY CONDITION POWER SHARING IN TERMS OF A TWO TIER GOVERNMENT. CATTO.
UNQUOTE KISSINGER.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, INDEPENDENCE, INTERIM GOVERNMENT, CAT-B, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, NATIONALISTS, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: saccheem
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE296235
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: RTIERNEY:NB
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Film Number: N760009-0054
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 2
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761271/aaaacjgk.tel
Line Count: 185
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: NODIS, ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS, ONLY
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: saccheem
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14 MAY 2004 by woolfhd>; APPROVED <07 SEP 2004 by saccheem>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: LOCK1
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RHODESIA CONFERENCE: MEETING WITH NKOMO DEC 3
TAGS: PFOR, PDEV, RH, UK, (NKOMO, JOSHUA)
To: LONDON USUN NEW YORK
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006